

# **Building a High Performance Work Model: Opportunities for Human-Capital Resilience during Uncertain Times**

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## **Abstract**

The literature on the use of human resources to boost individual and collective organisational performance has been predominantly silent on whether a model can help show how it can be implemented in practice. As SMEs are pressurised to perform there is an urgent need for HRM practice and research to investigate whether developing such a model could contribute in deepening our understanding and knowledge of ‘how’ human capital can contribute to such an acute problem during uncertainty. This paper’s research results were collected from a survey of 85 managers and employees from four SMEs in the UK. The results were used to develop this paper’s main contribution, namely a ‘high performance work model’ which extends the theoretical foundations of resilience and contingency theories. The model also produce this paper’s second contribution, namely the concept of ‘human capital resilience’. The model and its theory will help SMEs to identify aspects they need to focus on in order to more effectively manage their *human* resources and secondly to show how performance management can be implemented in practice at the micro and macro levels. Doing so addresses a performance implementation gap in SMEs, enables their longer-term survival and builds their human capacity for the future. The number of SMEs surveyed and questionnaire categories are the study’s limitations. Areas for future HRM research are highlighted.

*Keywords:* performance, uncertainty, HRM, model, resilience, human capital

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